

SOME ACCOUNT OF  
THE AMERICAN  
=  
FREE-TRADE LEAGUE  
AND OF ITS  
P U R P O S E S.

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1869 :

OFFICE, 67 & 69 WILLIAM STREET,  
NEW YORK.

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U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

1971

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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## SOME ACCOUNT OF THE FREE- TRADE LEAGUE AND OF ITS PURPOSES.

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THE FREE-TRADE LEAGUE has now existed several years, during which time its operations have consisted in the circulating of tracts, the printing of a newspaper and in providing free public lectures explanatory of the principles underlying trade.

The present position of strength occupied by the League and the prominence which the question of Freedom of Trade has of late assumed are owing in a measure to the past efforts of the Society.

We have no hesitation in saying, however, that previous to the late presidential election it was found impossible to excite any great general interest in our subject, for the reason that the problem of reconstruction and questions appertaining to the debt virtually absorbed public attention.

Since that election there has been a marked change in the acceptation of our doctrines by the people ; formerly a few persons used to assemble to listen to our lecturers, now we get large audiences ; where we had a dollar we now have ten dollars.

As our means have increased we have enlarged our undertakings and we are now pursuing the following plan of operations :

A monthly newspaper has been regularly published during the last two years

and 150,000 copies have been circulated. We now propose to convert this newspaper into a weekly and to improve it in all respects.

Colporteurs distribute tracts through the country and endeavor to find out voluntary co-operators who will circulate documents among their friends: in this way a comparatively few traveling agents put in motion a system by means of which the attention of an immense number of persons is drawn to the reasons for the present high cost of living, and to the unnecessary burdens imposed upon the agricultural classes by the protectionists.

These colporteurs will be followed by lecturers who will speak to the people in the localities where the tracts have been previously distributed; and after the deliv-

ery of the addresses efforts to form branch leagues will be made: these affiliated societies will be kept alive by the subsequent visits of other speakers and by correspondence.

In our country the press is the main-spring of public action and an earnest attempt is being made to place telling facts before the editors of the Free-Trade papers which they can give to their readers in their own way: there is a great demand for facts illustrative of the workings of the fallacious and oppressive system of "protection" and we have secured some of the best pens in the country to investigate costs of production, of transportation, tariff statistics, etc.

Every mail now brings us numerous letters asking for information and tendering

voluntary aid in the dissemination of our principles.

The LEAGUE has \$25,000 in its treasury, but it is all needed for operations already undertaken, and we must have \$100,000 to develop this agitation properly.

Every man and woman is personally interested in this question—FREE-TRADE means cheap food, cheap clothes, cheap house rent, cheap fuel. Every dollar helps us, and every person who sees this tract can well afford to give in proportion to his means, to secure a reform which will so greatly increase his comforts by diminishing the expense of living.

The merchants of America are shrewd and far sighted, will they not support us in our endeavors to overthrow a tariff framed to prevent trade by excessive duties imposed upon the products of foreign

countries, only because they are cheaper and therefore more desirable than those which we blunderingly attempt to produce ourselves. By producing what we can make most easily and cheaply and by exchanging such products for those that can be made MORE cheaply elsewhere we should be employing American industry in the most efficient way. Such an exercise of our industry is most efficient because it is most natural.

“Protection” does but run opposition to the gratuities of nature, to differences of climate, and to social conditions; and the loss consequent upon so mistaken a policy the consumer is required to make good.

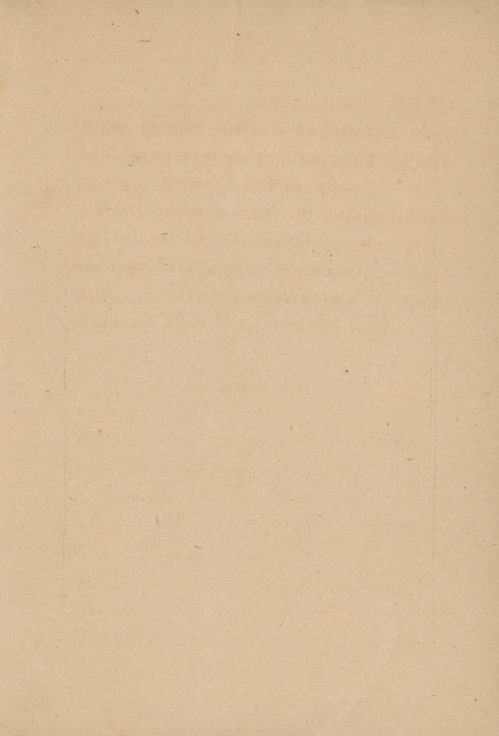
Under FREE-TRADE the volume of our commerce would enormously increase and an increase of commerce means to the



farmer broader markets and to the merchant greater opportunities, and to the masses abundance and cheapness.

Every dollar invested in our undertaking will return four fold to the giver when we have obtained a strictly revenue tariff. A REVENUE TARIFF AND NO MONOPOLIES.—*These are our watch-words.*

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